(b) if so, whether TRAI has received views of stakeholders on this issue;

(c) whether after taking note of constraints faced by telecome companies in maintaining telecom growth despite limited spectrum, PM assured telecome operators of releasing additional spectrum for commercial use;

(d) if so, whether on the intervention of Prime Minister, an additional spectrum is being released for commercial use; and

(e) if so, by when the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. TRAI released a Consultation Paper on "Allocation and pricing of spectrum for 3G Services and Broadband wireless Access" on 12.6.2006 to invite comments of various stakeholders.

(b) Comments were received by TRAI from various stakeholders and Open House discussion on the consultation paper was also held by TRAI on 7th July, 2006 in New Delhi.

(c) to (e) The Hon'ble Prime Minister has approved an action point for vacating adequate spectrum from existing users and making it available for commercial use. Accordingly, a Project has been taken up for providing Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) links for some of the existing wireless links for release of additional spectrum. After completion of this Project, spectrum upto 45 MHZ would become available for allotment to telecome service providers.

Inter-Portability of cellphones numbers

1669. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated and finalized a policy for Inter-Portability of cellphone numbers between various telecom companies;.

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a demand for cellular phone subscribers to have the facility to migrate from one company to another;

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in giving directions in this regard;

(d) the other steps would be taken to give cellphone subscribers a chance to avail of goods offers without using their phone numbers; and

(e) the steps proposed to expedite matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) At present there are technical limitations such as nonavailability of dual technology handsets, clearing house mechanism etc.

Operational exchanges in Assam

1670. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that three new 256 PC-DOT exchanges have been sanctioned by BSNL during the financial year 2002-03 to be located at Jania, Gahia and Palhazi, District Barpet, Assam;

(b) whether these three exchanges are in operation now; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons thereof and by when these three exchanges would be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) With the availability of wireless technology, BSNL commissioned a Base Transceiver Station (BTS) in August 2004 at Barpeta which is providing wireless coverage to all these places. Telephone connections in Jania, Gahia and Palhazi, District Barpeta are being provided on Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) to willing customers. Consequently,-no action was taken to open telephone exchanges in these places.